



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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AIR QUALITY HEALTH ADVISORY

Smoke from Swan Lake wildfire affects Anchorage

The Anchorage Health Department (AHD) is issuing an Air Quality Health Advisory for June 28 – 30, 2019 notifying the public that wildfire smoke in the Municipality of Anchorage has reached concentrations considered unhealthy for sensitive groups. Smoky conditions are variable, from location to location and hour to hour. As of 07:00 on Friday, June 28th the concentration of ultra-fine particles from the smoke reached a concentration considered unhealthy for the general population.

Air pollutants have a greater adverse effect on children, the elderly and individuals with heart or lung ailments. Those who are especially sensitive to air pollution are advised to remain indoors whenever concentrations are forecast to reach or exceed levels considered unhealthy for sensitive groups (i.e. an AQI value exceeding 100). People are cautioned against conducting strenuous exercise and exertion outdoors while this health advisory is in effect. Please contact your health care provider if you have concerns.

Near real-time air quality conditions, which update at the top of each hour are available via the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation air monitoring stations report available at: <http://dec.alaska.gov/Applications/Air/airtoolsweb/Aq/>

The Anchorage Health Department will continue to monitor and report conditions while there remains a likelihood of potentially unhealthy air quality conditions. The current air quality forecast can be obtained by calling the air quality hotline at 343-4899 or by visiting www.muni.org/air.

Additional information:

The National Weather Service is forecasting active fire conditions along with a weak inversion layer which is trapping smoky air near to the ground in a wide region between the Chugach and Talkeetna mountains. The tiny particles in wood smoke are monitored as PM_{2.5} (particles smaller than 2.5 microns). The two monitoring sites reporting this parameter are located in northeast Anchorage and in Eagle River near Old Glenn Hwy and Business Loop Blvd. In locations where representative air quality data is not available, the following Air Quality Smoke Reference Guide may be used to estimate air quality levels resulting from wildfire smoke and its potential health impacts:

Visibility	Air Quality
10+ miles	Good
6 - 9 miles	Moderate
3 - 5 miles	Unhealthy for sensitive groups
1.5 - 2.5 miles	Unhealthy
0.9 - 1.4 miles	Very Unhealthy
0.8 miles or less	Hazardous

Air Quality Index

The EPA has assigned a specific color to each AQI category to make it easier for people to understand quickly whether air pollution is reaching unhealthy levels in their communities.

Air Quality Index Levels of Health Concern	Numerical Value	Meaning
Good	0 to 50	Air quality is considered satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk.
Moderate	51 to 100	Air quality is acceptable; however, for some pollutants there may be a moderate health concern for a very small number of people who are unusually sensitive to air pollution.
Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	101 to 150	Members of sensitive groups may experience health effects. The general public is not likely to be affected.
Unhealthy	151 to 200	Everyone may begin to experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.
Very Unhealthy	201 to 300	Health alert: everyone may experience more serious health effects.
Hazardous	301 to 500	Health warnings of emergency conditions. The entire population is more likely to be affected.